



FAIRFAX COUNTY  
**ANIMAL  
SHELTER**

# *the* Shelter Dish



[www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/animalservices](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/animalservices)

December 2007/January 2008



## *Home for the Holidays - Shelter Celebrates the Season with Special Sunday Hours*

The Animal Shelter is kicking off the 2007 holiday season by offering residents an extra opportunity to visit with loving dogs, cats and other critters awaiting adoption at the West Ox facility! The goal is for no pet in need of a home to be left behind this holiday season.

The Shelter will be open on Sundays, Dec. 2, 9 and 16 from noon to 4 p.m. The shelter not only has cats and dogs, but also rabbits, guinea pigs, birds, hamsters, ferrets and reptiles. Animals available for adoption can be viewed online at the Shelter's website [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/animalservices](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/animalservices) (click on View Animals Available for Adoption...).

The special adoption hours are part of the national Home 4 the Holidays campaign, which began as an effort to encourage responsible, interested citizens looking for a new pet to select from the unique variety of animals available through shelters and rescues instead of buying animals at pet stores that often fund puppy mills.

In addition to the special Sunday hours, regular adoption hours are Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Visit the website to review the Shelter's adoption policy, County and state animal codes, and to learn which documents to bring in order to adopt, which includes valid photo identification, proof of home ownership or pet lease restrictions. Please allow 45-90 minutes for each adoption during this busy season.

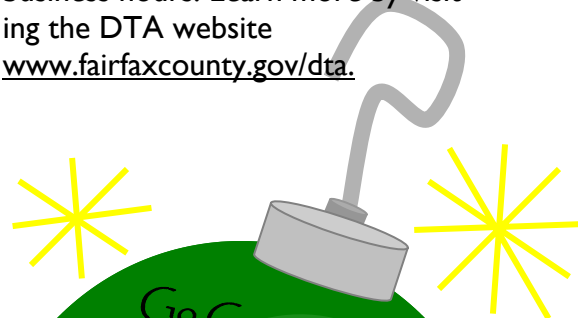


## **Renew your Dog License for 2008**



Residents are reminded that dogs four months and older must be licensed annually and vaccinated against rabies. Cats four months and older must be vaccinated against rabies but are not required to be licensed (County Code Section 41-2-1, 41-2-2, and 41-2-3). Dog licenses are valid for one year and must be purchased by January 31, 2008. Dog licenses are only sold with proof that the dog has been inoculated against rabies by a licensed veterinarian.

Dog licenses are available for \$5 per year for spayed and neutered animals and \$10 for unaltered animals. To obtain the \$5 license, you must show proof of the spay/neuter from your vet. All dogs must have a license tag securely attached to their collar and worn whenever off their owner's property. Residents with service dogs are provided a license free of charge. For your convenience, licenses may be purchased by mail, in person at the Department of Taxation office in the Government Center or at the Shelter during regular business hours. Learn more by visiting the DTA website [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dta](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dta).



### *Go Green Pet Tip*

*This Winter, use environmentally-friendly sidewalk salt for melting ice such as **Safe Paws Ice Melter**. Regular sidewalk salt pollutes the environment and irritates cats' and dogs' paws.*

# Hillsville Puppy Mill Rescue



*Above: Sarah is a beagle rescued by the Fairfax County Animal Services Division from a puppy mill in Hillsville, Va. The Division was asked to assist in sheltering and rehoming in a handful of the more than 1,100 dogs that were discovered at the Southern Virginia puppy mill.*

*At right: Animal Care-taker Isaac Mancilla helps unload a dog transported to the Shelter from the Hillsville puppy mill.*

When the call came for assistance in rescuing more 1,000 dogs born and raised in a puppy mill in Hillsville, Va., the Fairfax County Animal Services Division responded, deploying its Major Incident Support Unit for the first time in an out-of-county rescue as part of a regional effort.

Puppy mills are breeding facilities that produce purebred puppies in large numbers to be sold at pet stores and on the Internet.

The Humane Society of the United States asked the Fairfax County Animal Services Division for its help in the rescue. The Division worked with three other animal shelter shelters in the Washington metropolitan region—the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria, the Animal Welfare League of Arlington and the Washington Humane Society—to take in and find homes for the dogs in need.

On Thursday, Nov. 8, four Animal Control officers and a Shelter representative traveled to Hillsville as part of the rescue mission. Thirty-two dogs were brought back by staff the following day, including Bichon Frisés, Shih Tzus, Poodles, a Jack Russell Terrier, a Cocker Spaniel and other breeds.

During their first week at the shelter, the staff assessed the condition of the dogs and worked with a veterinarian to provide for their medical needs. Volunteers spent time walking and visiting with the dogs, teaching them to trust human affection.

Along with the nursing mothers and their pups, many of the dogs were placed in foster care temporarily for socialization to ready them for adoption.



Photos by Mary O'Malley

Although these dogs are receiving socialization from foster care providers, adopters will need to commit the time and energy it will take to help these little dogs become the wonderful companions that they are able to be, given a loving and caring home environment.

**The Fairfax County Animal Services Division would like to sincerely thank all the wonderful volunteers and foster care providers who assisted in this rescue effort.**

If you would like to become a volunteer or foster care provider, visit [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/animalservices/volunteer](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police/animalservices/volunteer).

Volunteer opportunities include working with animals, assisting at the front desk, answering telephones and performing administrative tasks. Foster care providers open their hearts and homes to animals who require extra attention, including those who need socialization to prepare them for adoption and those who need medical care.

# A Purr-fect Renovation

Recent visitors to the shelter have noticed a big change in the cat adoption area, which has been updated to promote a friendlier, healthier and more positive atmosphere for cats in the shelter's care.

The previous stainless steel metal caging was small, and often made loud noises during cleaning that disturbed the cats.

The new cat condos are a sleek, modern option for housing shelter animals designed to decrease anxiety many cats experience in a shelter setting. Each condo has two "rooms" for cats—one room for stretching out, relaxing, climbing, playing and eating and another room for a litter box.

Made from fiber glass and wood laminate with a PVC underlay, the condos include a negative air-flow system that pulls air from the room up through each condo and out of the shelter to prevent the spread of upper respiratory infections (URIs), a common problem in most Shelter settings that have a high-volume of cats.

During the Shelter staff's morning cleaning routine, cats are no longer removed from their condos. Now, cats are separated in either the main area of their condo or their litter box area while the staff spot cleans and replaces cats' toys, bedding, food and water.

With the new condos and cleaning process in place, the incidence of cats contracting URIs has dropped to almost none, helping the Shelter decrease veterinary bills incurred to treat cats that would have become ill with the previous caging system.

Thanks to the passage of a 2006 Bond Referendum, the Shelter is slated for a complete renovation. In preparation for the Shelter renovation, the cat condos were installed as part of a trial to determine the feasibility for



*Feline residents at the Fairfax County Animal Shelter enjoy their living quarters in the new cat condos, which were installed late summer. The condos have greatly decreased the stress level and reduced the occurrence of feline upper respiratory infection at the facility to almost none.*

their usage for cats throughout the Shelter when the entire building is renovated. Funding from the Shelter's Trust Fund, derived from private donations to the organization, was used to purchase the new condos, which were installed during the late summer.

The Animal Shelter's Trust Fund is used to support special projects at the shelter. Recent projects have included modification of dog kennel risers, support for the foster care program, a pet oxygen mask initiative and more.

Donations to the Shelter's Trust Fund in support of special projects may be addressed to the **"Fairfax County Animal Trust Fund"** and mailed or brought to the shelter at 4500 West Ox Road, Fairfax, VA 22030.



## Dear Santa, Here's our Holiday Wish List!

- Towels or small blankets
- Canned Cat Food (no seafood)
- Newspaper
- Toys, leashes, collars, dishes
- Crates, cages
- Small animal supplies
- Frontline and Interceptor
- Harnesses for Small Dogs
- Puppy Pads
- Round fleece cat beds
- Carefresh litter for rabbits
- Timothy Hay and Rabbit Food
- Paper Towels
- Nutro dry food



### Alumni Update:

## Adopter's Sense of Humor Lands Setter a Home

For some animals, a specific person is just meant to be theirs. That's Finnigan's story. He adopted Diana Jones in May of 2006—not the other way around.

Perhaps it is Diana's acceptance of Finnigan's shenanigans that makes them a perfect match. Diana's easy going attitude starts early in the morning when she wakes up to find that Finnigan has gnawed on a pair of her shoes. Diana's thinking: I'll have to train him not to do that, but at least it was a pair of shoes I didn't like anyway.

Finnigan is a large and extremely active Irish Setter who ended up in the shelter after being found as a stray. He was adopted out and returned because he was simply just too much dog for most people.

This was explained to Diana, but she was willing to give Finnigan his fair shake. "I knew he was a handful," she says. "He needed some manners, that's all." Diana had lost her previous Irish Setter and she felt like her loss became Finnigan's gain.

In his new home, Finnigan goes to the dog park and gets more than an hour of exercise each day. Diana reports that he is the keeper of the house, standing in front of her mirror and protecting her from the big Irish Setter he sees. He also stands guard in front of the refrigerator to keep the house safe from the ice maker.

Even with his quirks, Diana loves Finnigan. "He constantly has me laughing," she says. "This guy has a forever home, forever."



## Friends Lend Shelter Animals a Hand

**Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter** is an all volunteer, non-profit organization formed in 2006 to promote animal adoptions at the Shelter, educate the community about the importance of spay/neuter, and provide financial support to shelter animals suffering from illness, injury, neglect or abuse. The Friends of the Fairfax County Animal Shelter is a private organization of volunteers, independent of the Fairfax County government and operating with its own elected Board of Directors. The organization has hosted several events in support of the animals.

Its first fundraiser, a Mexican themed live and silent auction event called Cinco de Meow, was held in the spring. Local businesses and private citizens donated a wide variety of exciting auction items, raising more than \$10,000 for shelter animals.

This fall the group co-sponsored a dog walk and paw painting with the Lorton Arts Foundation at its Workhouse center in Lorton.

Funds from all these events have been already been allocated to assist the shelter with emergency medical, transport, and the spay/neuter of shelter animals.

The Friends of the Shelter will host more events in 2008 to help the Shelter with its mission. For more information about this volunteer group, please e-mail [fairfaxpets@cox.net](mailto:fairfaxpets@cox.net).



*Residents enjoy a beautiful Saturday fall morning for the Friends of the Shelter Dog Walk in Occoquan Regional Park.*



To request this information in an alternate format, contact the Fairfax County Animal Shelter, 703-830-1100 or TTY 711.



County of Fairfax, Va.